

The Clay Tree

THE WHISTLER

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1951

7:30 - 8:00 PM PST

1 ANNCR: And now stay tuned for the mystery program that is
2 unique among all mystery programs..because even when
3 you know who is guilty - you always receive a startling
4 surprise at the final curtain - in the Signal Oil
5 Program - "The Whistler"....
6 MUSIC: (WHISTLE)
7 MUSIC: (TYMP BEATS)
8 ANNCR: (ON ECHO) ...Signal...the famous go-farther gasoline -
9 invites you to sit back and enjoy another strange
10 story by the "Whistler".
11 MUSIC: (WHISTLER ON TO FULL ECHO..DIMINISH ECHO TO CLEAR AND
12 SEGUE TO ORCHESTRA AND UP TO CLIMAX)
13 WHISTLER: ...I am the Whistler... (SNEAK IN ORCHESTRA THEME AND
14 CARRY UNDER FOLLOWING) ...And I know many things for
15 I walk by night. I know many strange tales hidden in
16 the hearts of men and women who have stepped into the
17 shadows. Yes, I know the nameless terrors of which
18 they dare not speak.
19 MUSIC: (THEME AND TYMPANY BRIDGE)
20 ANNCR: And now for the Signal Oil Company, the Whistler's
21 strange story, "THE CLAY TREE".

1 WHISTLER: Russ Thompson's movements were quiet, his steps slow
2 and even as he paced back and forth across the wide
3 corridor. ((The house itself was still in the hushed,
4 ominous silence so often present just before death
5 makes a claim.)) Russ would stop occasionally, look
6 up to where the winding, heavy-railed staircase
7 disappeared to the floor above. It was almost as if
8 he could see what was going on up there in old Alvira
9 Clay's bedroom...the doctor checking Alvira's fading
10 pulse, Jennifer Clay, Alvira's niece, looking on...
11 ((her young face strained..weary...from the past week's
12 terrible excitement...)) You start to pace again,
13 Russ, then stop as Alvira's attorney, Jace Devlin,
14 sighs softly from his position in the big wing chair
15 across the living room... ~~You move toward Jace....~~

16 SOUND: FEW FOOTSTEPS, THEN STOP

17 RUSS: What do you think, Jace? Think the doctor's right --
18 that Alvira won't last?
19 JACE: (OLDER) She's old, Russ - very old - and quite tired.
20 RUSS: ((She's stubborn.
21 JACE: (SIGHS) There are times - and things - that
22 stubbornness cannot hope to challenge. Also, what's
23 going on outside - it doesn't help.
24 RUSS: She can't hear them. She doesn't even know there's
25 anybody out there...
26 JACE: Quite a crowd - buzzing, too - they don't like what
27 she did, not at all...

1 RUSS: (IMPATIENT) Well, it's done - and it doesn't look as
2 if she's going to live to change it, Jace.)) (TENSE)
3 I wish Jennifer would come down - let us know.
4 JACE: (SHRUGS) You heard the doctor's last report. (PAUSE)
5 Your attitude, Russ ---
6 RUSS: (SNAPS) What about it?
7 JACE: Most admirable. I know you've always thought a lot
8 of the Clays -- I mean far beyond your management of
9 their land and holdings ---
10 RUSS: I've tried to do what's right.
11 JACE: You've done nobly. Even this feeling about poor old
12 Alvira -- After all, it isn't as if she didn't live
13 a good, long life.
14 RUSS: That isn't everything.
15 JACE: It helps.
16 RUSS: The killing of her son didn't help any. Especially
17 the way he was killed. (SHAKES HEAD) Poor Alvira...
18 JACE: I still wish you had tried to talk her out of leaving
19 that tree up there on the hill - with that plaque on
20 it... (READS) "To the memory of hasty hands that took
21 justice and law unto themselves"....It's a monument
22 of shame...That's what it is.
23 RUSS: And why shouldn't it be? If your only son was hanged
24 by a wild mob ---
25 JACE: (GENTLY) By mistake, Russ.....a terrible mistake.

1 RUSS: That doesn't bring the boy back.
2 JACE: No, no...nor the Anderson girl they thought he killed.
3 But what are you going to do...Alvira's son was going
4 with the girl, they'd quarrelled, when she was
5 murdered it was natural for people to think he did it.
6 RUSS: It wasn't natural to hang him - take the law into
7 their own hands.
8 JACE: But they did, Russ - and then learned, too late, that
9 the boy couldn't possibly have done it. That it was
10 someone else who killed her.
11 RUSS: Anyway, I don't condemn Alvira - I mean for putting
12 the plaque on that tree up there -- it's going to stay
13 there, you know!
14 JACE: So it seems, Russ - with Alvira refusing to change
15 her mind on her death bed.
16 RUSS: Did you ever stop to think that all this might have
17 helped to kill her?
18 JACE: I have - but I don't believe it - nor does Alvira's
19 doctor. She's simply an old woman...old, tired...
20 sick. (SIGHS) I wish she'd change her mind.
21 RUSS: And I hope she doesn't!
22 JACE: (PATIENT) All right, Russ...you've a right to feel
23 as you wish.
24 RUSS: Thanks. Suppose we stop talking about it.
25 ((MUSIC: (IN AND UNDER)

1 WHISTLER: It's a strange situation, isn't it, Russ...Attorney
2 Jace Devlin mistaking your attitude for strong
3 devotion to Alvira Clay....Actually it's far different,
4 ~~isn't it~~...yes...and as you walk out to the window,
5 look up toward the big tree on the hill you're
6 trembling inside..trembling with fear and anxiety....
7 the little crowd of townspeople around the tree, Russ..
8 supposing they got excited, decided to tear the tree
9 down...The Old Clay Tree..you hate it as much as any
10 of them, don't you..but for a much different reason...
11 and in spite of your hate you find yourself hoping that
12 the tree ^{must} will not be touched..that it will continue
13 to exist....
14 RUSS: (SUDDENLY) Jace!
15 JACE: (OFF) Yes, Russ?))
16 RUSS: I- I'm going out - for a walk.
17 JACE: (COMING ON) Going up to have another look at the tree?
18 RUSS: What if I am?
19 JACE: (SHRUGS) Well - I guess the people know how you
20 feel -- anyway, it will be a long time before they're
21 in a mood to do ~~any more~~ harm. *anyone feel*
22 RUSS: Alvira's at least accomplished that.
23 JACE: Yes - she's at least accomplished that. (PAUSE, THEN
24 GENTLY) Go on, Russ - mind the door slam.
25 MUSIC: (IN AND UNDER)

rephrasing and lie.

1 WHISTLER: Striding up the hill toward the old tree your mind
2 spins, doesn't it, Russ...its branches silhouetted
3 against the sky look weird, accusing...equally
4 accusing are the softly muttering people standing
5 around at the base of the tree, staring at the plaque
6 which Alvira ordered placed there following the
7 hanging death of her son. You're thankful that the
8 plaque is all that these people can see, aren't you,
9 Russ...yes...thankful that no one but you knows what's
10 inside the hollow trunk of the aging tree...and you
11 hope there'll soon be no one around, watching, and that
12 you'll have an opportunity to remove this terrible
13 evidence...evidence that would tell a far different
14 story than the one Hank, Alvira's caretaker, is
15 recounting to a news photographer as you walk up,
16 stop nearby....

17 CAST: LOW AD LIBS OCCASIONALLY IN B.G.

18 HANK: (ANTICIPATE) And that's about it, mister - been in
19 most all the newspapers - This Anderson girl used to
20 keep company with Alvira's son, they quarrelled, she
21 was found dead and folks blamed him.

22 CHARLIE: Hanged him without a trial of any kind, didn't they?

23 HANK: A mob trial, I guess you'd say. Hung him there on
24 the highest limb.

25 CHARLIE: (SHAKING HIS HEAD) Terrible..

26 HANK: Umm...more terrible when somebody later proved the boy
27 wasn't anywhere around - couldn't'a done it.

1 CHARLIE: Hard to blame the old woman for putting up the plaque-
2 let's see now - I want to get a picture of it ---
3 HANK: Right there in front of you - plain to see - (READS)
4 "To the Memory of Hasty Hands that Took Justice and
5 the Law unto Themselves". You didn't have to come all
6 the way down here, mister - those words been in the
7 papers a lot the past two weeks.
8 CHARLIE: Ours is a different angle - pictures - we do a layout
9 covering the whole story - the tree here, the plaque,
10 reaction shots of the townspeople --
11 HANK: They won't like it. (((UP) Right, Mr. Thompson - ?
12 RUSS: Uh - ?
13 HANK: (COMING ON) I say folks won't like this magazine fella
14 taking pictures - they're ashamed, but they're pretty
15 fed up, too.))
16 CHARLIE: (OFF; CALLS) Folks, would you move aside a little -
17 I want to get a close shot of that plaque...
18 CAST: (AD LIB REACTION..ANNOYANCE)
19 SOUND: CAMERA CLICKS
20 CHARLIE: That does it - I'll get another for protection - and
21 then if you folks don't mind...maybe a few of you
22 looking up at the tree.
23 MAN: (ANNOYED) Suppose we do mind - ?
24 WOMAN: Yes - we've just about suffered enough.
25 HANK: Now, now - easy, folks..Russ - uh, Mr. Thompson -
26 better talk to 'em..

1 RUSS: I'm not interested!

2 CHARLIE: (OFF) Look, folks - I'm just doing my job - it's
3 news -- my magazine, they sent me down here!

4 MAN: And we're sendin' you back - Go on - we're not posing
5 - and you have your picture of the plaque!

6 HANK: Better do what he says, mister - I can't be
7 responsible...

8 MAN: Go on..get out of here!

9 CAST: (ANGRY REACTIONS...MOVE OFF WITH CHARLIE)

10 CHARLIE: (PROTESTING...BACKING OFF) Okay....take it easy.
11 Don't have to shove me...I'm goin'...

12 HANK: See you later, Mr. Thompson - I better help him get
13 out of here...

14 RUSS: Sure...sure. Go ahead, Hank.

15 CAST: (ANGRY AD LIBS, SHOUTS OFF)

16 MUSIC: (IN AND UNDER)

1 WHISTLER: You wait until the small crowd of townspeople and the
2 protesting magazine photographer have all gone - then
3 you look around, decide there's no one watching, then
4 step quickly over to the tree, reach your arm down
5 inside the hollow trunk....it's where you dropped
6 the letters that night, isn't it...and the gun....the
7 letters that the Anderson girl had written you after
8 she'd uncovered evidence concerning a nefarious deal
9 in which you'd participated....murder had been your
10 answer to the girl's blackmail scheme, hadn't it,
11 Russ....yes, murder...but in your haste to escape
12 after meeting and killing her here near the great
13 tree, you'd been forced to throw the letters and your
14 gun into the hollow trunk, thinking that you could
15 easily get them out, later. But now, as you try to
16 reach them -- that the hollow extends *much deeper* ~~eight or ten~~
17 *than you thought* feet toward the base of the tree.

18 RUSS: (STRAINING, REACHING) Can't get close to them -- I
19 can't get them out!

20 HANK: (OFF) Mr. Thompson - ?

21 WHISTLER: (COLD) You whirl, drawing your arm quickly out of the
22 tree trunk, your hand empty, as Hank, the caretaker,
23 comes back up the hill

24 HANK: (COMING ON) He's gone, Mr. Thompson - that reporter -
25 They run 'im off!

1 RUSS: It's just as well.....
2 HANK: Been somebody around here ever since it happened.
3 RUSS: Yeah.
4 HANK: What do you think will happen to the tree now, Mr.
5 Thompson?
6 RUSS: Happen - ? Why should anything happen to it?
7 HANK: (SURPRISED) Why, haven't you heard - ? I thought you
8 handled all of Alvira's properties.
9 RUSS: Well, my office does, of course. But I don't see --
10 HANK: I heard only yesterday that some fella named Carson's
11 aiming to buy this property - wants to put up a new
12 house - right smack on the knoll there.
13 RUSS: Oh, no, no....Alvira'd never stand for that.
14 HANK: But if she dies, Mr. Thompson, and it seems as if
15 she will -- then what -- ?
16 RUSS: Well - there's her niece, Jennifer - a good sensible
17 girl.
18 HANK: Yeh, but Jen never did hanker too much after putting
19 that placque up there ... thought it was unfair to all
20 the people in town that didn't have anything to do
21 with it. Jen might just sell, don't you think, Mr.
22 Thompson - ?
23 RUSS: (SHAKY) Uh - I don't know, I'm sure. If you don't
24 mind, Hank -- I've got to get back inside -- I-uh-
25 forgot that I left Jace Devlin waiting for me
26 MUSIC: (IN AND UNDER)

1 WHISTLER: You scarcely know what you're saying, do you, Russ....
2 the fear inside you is mounting so...You were so
3 certain you could reach the gun and those letters,
4 didn't realize that the hollow in the tree went so
5 far down and that you'll have to improvise a way to
6 fish them out when you get the chance. You hurry back
7 to the house, discover Jace Devlin on his feet
8 looking toward the wide, circular staircase --
9 Jennifer is standing there, isn't she, Russ...
10 white-faced, silent, looking down on both of you..
11 then--- *THUNDER*
12 JENNIFER: (OFF, PROJECTS) She's dead...Aunt Alvira is dead.
13 It's -- up to me now -- to look after the house of
14 Clay!
15 MUSIC: (CURTAIN)

ORCHESTRA: ("SHE LIVED ON THE SUNNY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN - HE LIVED
ON THE TWILIGHT SIDE OF THE HILL")

ANNOUNCER: In that popular new song - "She lived on the sunny side of the mountain; he lived on the twilight side of the hill" - they tell of a boy and girl who lived so near to each other - yet never got acquainted; never got to know each other. Well - don't laugh friends! You may be living even closer than that - to wonderfully improved performance for your car; yet never get to know what proud performance your car can deliver - unless you get acquainted with Signal Ethyl gasoline. You may never know how quickly your car can start on cold mornings - unless you try Signal Ethyl. You may never know what peppy pickup - what smooth quiet power your engine can deliver - unless you try Signal Ethyl gasoline. For the premium grade of Signal's famous go-farther gasoline is a true super fuel - scientifically engineered to bring out the best in any car - of any age. And fortunately - unlike the boy in the song - you won't have to drive over a hill to try Signal Ethyl. You'll need only drive into the nearest Signal Station and say; "Fill 'er up with Ethyl." Why don't you - the very next time you need gas?

whistle

WHISTLER -13-
11-25-51

1 MUSIC: (THEME)

2 WHISTLER: It was a dread moment, wasn't it, Russ...hearing that
3 old Alvira Clay was dead ... and having no idea what
4 her niece, Jennifer, will do now that it is up to her
5 to run things. You try several times to recover your
6 gun and the tell tale letters from the murdered Anderson
7 girl - but you can't get to them. If the tree is
8 chopped down before you get them, the evidence against
9 you would be conclusive, wouldn't it Russ, and the
10 townspeople, in their fury, would destroy you, in the
11 same way they destroyed Alvira's son. You know that
12 tree must stand, don't you, Russ ... until you can
13 somehow fish the gun and letters out of the hollow
14 trunk....You wish that people would stop paying visits
15 to the tree, and then one morning, at your real estate
16 office, another visit occurs, a frightening one, in the
17 person of a Mr. Carson...

18 SOUND: (ANTICIPATE BELL OVER SCREEN DOOR, DOOR CLOSES, STEPS IN)

19 CARSON: (CHEERFUL) Good morning - Mr. Thompson - ?

20 RUSS: (DOWN) That's right.

21 CARSON: My name is Carson - Finlay Carson. I - uh - understand
22 you handle the Clay properties.

23 RUSS: I do.

24 CARSON: There's a particular piece I'm interested in -- Uh --
25 the knoll just above their place. You know the one,
26 I'm sure - with the old tree --

27 RUSS: (CUTS IN, ABRUPT) That piece of property, Mr. Carson,
28 is not for sale!

KT

1 CARSON: Oh - ? But I thought since the old lady has passed on -
2 RUSS: The old lady, as you call her - Alvira Clay, as I call
3 her - would not have wanted to sell. I'm certain her
4 niece will respect those wishes.
5 CARSON: I - I see...
6 RUSS: I hope you do, sir. It will make it easier for both of
7 us if we respect the ~~-- the~~ wishes of the deceased.
8 CARSON: Well, I must say that's a noble attitude...I didn't
9 think that the average salesman --
10 RUSS: No need for there to be any unpleasantness between us,
11 Mr. Carson -- perhaps I can show you something else...
12 CARSON: Uh - not today, thank you. You see - I - well...more
13 or less had my heart set on that knoll...((Just right
14 for some plans Mrs. Carson has in mind...a bit of
15 leveling perhaps, the removal of that unsightly tree --
16 RUSS: ~~I'm sorry, Mr. Carson, I thought I made it quite clear!~~
17 CARSON: ~~Yes, yes - you did. Quite clear,))~~ Mr. Thompson. Well
18 - see you again, perhaps.
19 RUSS: On any other piece of property in the town, Mr. Carson -
20 I'll be happy to help you in any way.
21 CARSON: Thank you. (CHEERFULLY) Good day, Mr. Thompson.
22 SOUND: (HE EXITS, BELL SOUNDS...DOOR CLOSED)
23 MUSIC: (IN AND UNDER)

1 WHISTLER: You're safe for the time being, aren't you, Russ...but
2 that isn't good enough, is it...You've got to find a
3 way to protect the secret the Clay tree holds...make
4 certain it will never be taken down, at least until you
5 can somehow find an opportunity to remove the gun and
6 letters from the hollow trunk...You think about it in
6 the days that follow...and finally the answer comes to
7 you one morning as you're having a late breakfast at the
8 corner lunch room where you've grabbed quick snacks
9 for years...as you listen to the idle chatter of Frank
10 the counterman.

11 COUNTERMAN: Well, Mr. Thompson, I guess the Clay House'll have a
12 lot of callers from now on, huh?

13 RUSS: What do you mean, Frank?

14 COUNTERMAN: I mean Miss Jennifer. Now that she's come into the
15 Clay money I guess some of the young fellas around
16 town'll be droppin' in to see her.

17 RUSS: Oh. Yes...I suppose so.

18 COUNTERMAN: Nice girl, Miss Jennifer. Not what you'd call a
19 raving beauty...but a mighty nice girl.

20 RUSS: She's all right.

21 COUNTERMAN: (LEANS IN, CONFIDENTIALLY) Might be smart for you
22 to think about her a little, Mr. Thompson...if you know
23 what I mean.

24 RUSS: I'm afraid I don't.

25 COUNTERMAN: Well, she's always been sorta fond of you ain't she?

26 RUSS: We've been friends for a long time.

1 COUNTERMAN: I got an idea she'd like it better if you two were
2 more than just "friends."

3 RUSS: Really?

4 COUNTERMAN: Yep. That's what I think. What do you think?

5 RUSS: (PAUSE) I think...I'll have some more coffee, *Frank*

6 MUSIC: (IN AND UNDER)

1 WHISTLER: The pressure would ease, wouldn't it, Russ, if you
2 could be certain that at least for the present,
3 Jennifer won't sell the Clay Tree property. She's
4 always liked you, you know that...but you've never
5 paid much attention to her, have you....hardly
6 noticed her. *But Frank the landman gives you an idea* You decide to call on Jennifer ...and
7 you do, several evenings in a row, and in the weeks
8 that pass you're most attentive. She's pleased isn't
9 she, Russ...until one night as you stop by the house
10 to pick her up...
11 RUSS: Hello, Jen. Hey, not ready yet? I thought we were
12 going out to dinner?
13 JEN: Come in, Russ. I'll only be a moment.
14 SOUND: FOOTSTEPS IN....DOOR CLOSES
15 I've had a visitor.
16 RUSS: Oh? Anyone I know? Competition perhaps?
17 JEN: Hardly. My caller was Mr. Carson.
18 RUSS: (JUMPS) Carson!
19 JEN: Yes. He told me he'd made you an offer for the Clay
20 Tree property....is that right?
21 RUSS: Yes...that's right.
22 JEN: And you turned it down.
23 RUSS: Well....yes I did.
24 JEN: Why wasn't I consulted about this?
25 RUSS: Oh...I...I didn't think it was necessary...
26 JEN: Didn't you?
27 RUSS: Now look, Jennifer -

1 JEN: I know. You just naturally assumed that because of
2 Aunt Alvira...the tree...that I'd turn down Carson,
3 too.
4 RUSS: Of course.
5 JEN: Well, you're wrong.
6 RUSS: Wh-what?
7 JEN: I've accepted Mr. Carson's offer.
8 RUSS: You've ...accepted!
9 JEN: Yes...a very generous offer I think.
10 RUSS: But the Tree...he'll have it taken down.
11 JEN: It's high time someone did.
12 RUSS: (STUNNED) You...You can't mean that!
13 JEN: I most certainly do. I never dared tell Aunt Alvira
14 --but that Tree, Russ...*that horrible plaque*...the whole idea of it---well,
15 I think it's perfectly hideous.
16 RUSS: Jennifer, listen to me...
17 JEN: It's no use. I've made up my mind. I know Aunt
18 Alvira thought very highly of you Russ...listened to
19 your advice. I intend to do the same in all matters
20 except this. I insist the Clay Tree property be sold.
21 RUSS: (PAUSE) I...I see.
22 JEN: Mr. Carson will be expecting your call in the
23 morning. I'll want you to handle all the details.
24 RUSS: (TIGHTLY) Of course.
25 JEN: Now let's drop the matter, shall we?
26 MUSIC: / (IN AND UNDER)

1 WHISTLER: It seems hopeless, doesn't it, Russ...you're certain
2 you can't talk Jennifer into changing her mind.
3 Carson's won..He'll have the tree chopped down and
4 unless you can recover the damning evidence against
5 you first, its fall will reveal your guilt. You
6 spend a sleepless night trying to think of a quick
7 way out. The following day you're in your office
8 when a visitor calls....Its Jace Devlin...Alvira
9 Clay's attorney...
10 JACE: (COMING ON) Glad I found you in, Russ...
11 RUSS: Something wrong, Mr. Devlin?
12 JACE: I've just heard some rather disturbing news.
13 RUSS: Oh?
14 JACE: The talk around town is that George Carson is going
15 to buy the Clay Tree property...
16 RUSS: Yes....that's right. I tried to talk Jennifer out of
17 it but -
18 JACE: She can't sell, y'know.
19 RUSS: Wh-what?
20 JACE: According to the terms of Alvira Clay's will, Jennifer
21 cannot sell that property.
22 RUSS: She...can't....sell...
23 JACE: That's right. It was Alvira's way of making certain
24 nothing would happen to that Tree.
25 RUSS: *you* Mr. Devlin...are you sure?
26 JACE: Of course I am. Drew up the will myself. I'm
surprised Jennifer didn't know about it...

1 RUSS: (STARTS TO CHUCKLE) She...can't...sell...
2 JACE: Something amusing, Russ?
3 RUSS: BUILDS CHUCKLE TO ROAR OF LAUGHTER
4 MUSIC: (COVERS, BRIDGE TO)
5 JEN: Are you absolutely certain I can't sell, Russ?
6 RUSS: According to Jace Devlin...and he ought to know. He
7 drew up the will for your Aunt..
8 JEN: I see.
9 RUSS: I gather you didn't bother to read the will, Jen.
10 JEN: No, I didn't see any reason why I should. I knew
11 Aunt Alvira had left everything to me and...(SHRUGS)
12 Well, that's that, I suppose. No sale.
13 RUSS: No sale. If you'll excuse me now I'd better look up
14 Carson...tell him its all off.
15 JEN: Won't you stay for lunch?
16 RUSS: Uh...better not. Have a busy day.
17 JEN: All right. Will I see you tonight?
18 RUSS: Afraid not, Jen. I'm going to be busy then, too.
19 JEN: (DISAPPOINTED) Oh...I see.
20 RUSS: I'll phone you tomorrow though Jen.
21 JEN: Yes. (BEAT) Do that.
22 MUSIC: (IN AND UNDER)
23 WHISTLER: The tree is safe, isn't it, Russ...and time is on
24 your side again. Soon the tree will be forgotten
25 deserted and you can do whatever is necessary to get
26 your gun and letters out....even chop into it.
27 Jennifer isn't important now. You hurry back to
28 your office....put in a call to George Carson.
(MORE)

1 WHISTLER: He's disappointed when you tell him the deal is off...
(CONT.)
2 but then something he says sends a wave of fear
3 sweeping over you...
4 CARSON: (FILTER) Well, how was I to know? I thought the sale
5 was on...and I wanted to get started right away....
6 RUSS: (TREMBLING) ~~You~~...you sent Hank Thomas out to chop
7 down the tree?!!
8 CARSON: (FILTER) Yes...he's probably out there now.
9 MUSIC: (HITS, BRIDGE)
10 SOUND: OUTDOOR B.G. RUSS RUNNING THRU BRUSH AND IN DISTANCE
11 WE HEAR AXE STRIKING TREE
12 RUSS: (SHOUTS) Hank! Hank!
13 SOUND: CHOPPING OUT...CONTINUE RUNNING FOOTSTEPS
14 HANK: (SLIGHT OFF) Howdy, Mr. Thompson.
15 RUSS: (PULLS TUP TO STOP, BREATHING HEAVILY) You can put
16 up that axe, Hank.
17 HANK: Huh?
18 RUSS: You're all through here.
19 HANK: But I just got started.
20 RUSS: The tree isn't going to be chopped down.
21 HANK: But Mr. Carson said -
22 RUSS: Never mind what Carson said. The deal is off. I
23 just talked to him on the phone.
24 HANK: Sale is off, huh?
25 RUSS: That's right.
26 HANK: How about the five dollars he paid me...?
27 RUSS: You can keep it.

1 HANK: That's fine with me. Y'know I was just thinking I
2 shoulda charged him ten dollars at least. Bigger job
3 than I thought. Well, guess I might as well get
4 back to the house..
5 RUSS: Wait a minute. You're not going to leave the tree
6 half chopped like this are you?
7 HANK: Why not? *down*
8 RUSS: There's a ~~wind~~ coming up. You'd better do something
9 about propping it....
10 HANK: Don't think that'll be necessary, Mr. Thompson.
11 As you can see I didn't chop very deep into the trunk
12 there and -
13 RUSS: I don't want to take any chances!
14 HANK: Well, whatever you say. I'll get some rope from
15 the house...(LOOKS UP, SCRATCHES HEAD) Lemme see.
16 I could loop a rope around that top branch...anchor
17 it with a stake in the ground over there...Could do
18 the same on the other side...
19 RUSS: Yes, I think that'll do fine. Will you get started,
20 Hank?
21 HANK: Sure thing, Mr. Thompson.
22 MUSIC: (IN AND UNDER)

1 WHISTLER: A few minutes later Hank returns with several long
2 coils of rope, ~~some heavy iron hooks...~~ *marked* you watch
3 ~~as he climbs the tree,~~ *fastens* loops them around the topmost
4 branches and then climbs down to draw his ropes
5 tight around some heavy stakes...

6 SOUND: WIND -- OCCASIONALLY IN B.G.

7 RUSS: All secure, Hank - ?

8 HANK: She ought to hold fine, Mr. Thompson. ((In the
9 morning I'll see what I can do about something
10 more permanent - maybe put a jacket of cement around
11 the base of the tree.

12 RUSS: Just send me the bill when you're finished, Hank.

13 HANK: Right.))

14 RUSS: ~~Uh - those hooks and the rest of the rope there -~~
15 ~~what are they for?~~

16 HANK: ~~Thought I'd use the hooks on the branches, but I~~
17 ~~won't need 'em... I'll just leave them till tomorrow.~~
18 Well, see you, Mr. Thompson - I've got some chores
19 to tend to.

20 RUSS: Of course, Hank - you go on.

21 MUSIC: (IN AND UNDER)

22 WHISTLER: You watch Hank start away, down the hill...a moment
23 *he's brought you just the tools you need* later you lift one of the big, iron hooks he brought..
24 just the thing, isn't it, Russ...to fish the gun and
25 letters from the hollow tree trunk..The first real
26 chance you've had. You're about to rig up a grappling
27 apparatus when you hear someone a few feet away from
28 you.

(MORE)

1 WHISTLER: (CONT'D) It's Jace Devlin...Alvira's attorney...
2 you must get rid of him quickly...The wind is
3 increasing in fury..and you're not certain the
4 tree can withstand the pressure of the storm after
5 Hank's chopping into the trunk... Besides you have
6 Hank's hooks and you're sure you'll never have
7 another opportunity as good as this one... You turn...
8 address Jace Devlin.

9 RUSS: Hello Jace..
10 JACE: Hi Russ...still worried about the tree?
11 RUSS: Well - I thought it best to take certain precautions.
12 JACE: Of course. I must say you've shown great concern
13 over the welfare of the Clay Tree, Russ..
14 RUSS: Well, yes.. but you see I felt a certain responsibility
15 ...After all, I should have checked with you before
16 okaying Jennifer's sale to Carson...
17 JACE: I understand, my boy. I understand. Well, ~~don't~~
18 ~~worry about it. I'm certain the Clay Tree will~~
19 ~~stand for a long..long time to come..(SIGHS)~~ Well,
20 guess I'll get back to the house, Russ. Coming along?
21 RUSS: Uh - not right away, Jace - wind's rising, I want to
22 see how these ropes hold. I'll be along.
23 JACE: All right - Don't think you have to worry though -
24 I'd say the old Clay Tree's going to stand for
25 a long time.
26 RUSS: Yes - yes, it - it does seem that way.
27 MUSIC: (CURTAIN)

ANNCR:

Because so many tires these days - claim to have "some kind" of guarantee - tonight I'd like to point out the difference in tire guarantees; point out the extra protection you get in the double guarantee on Lee Tires. (PAUSE) You see - guarantees against defective workmanship and material are quite common. But few tires are backed by a written ROAD-hazard guarantee such as is offered by Lee. A guarantee you can read- see what it says - and have it with you when you need it. Most important - however - is what Lee's generous road-hazard guarantee covers. It covers any unexpected damage to a Lee Super Deluxe Tire during the first fifteen months. Any damage such as cuts or bruises which might make it necessary to replace a tire. Now obviously - in order to give you such a generous written guarantee - Lee Tires must contain extra quality - although you pay nothing extra for them. Only one of the hundreds of thousands of enthusiastic Lee Tire owners could tell you how much extra - Lees give. Extra mileage - extra safety - extra value - that make it well worth your while to get your next tires at one of the nineteen thousand Lee Tire Dealers throughout America - which include all Signal Service Stations.

MUSIC: (THEME)

SOUND: Wind (fades in under first sentence)

WHISTLER: The news of the tragedy spread quickly and the townspeople flocked hurriedly to the scene...a windswept hill...a twisted, misshapen tree silhouetted against the sky. Exactly how the accident happened was not quite clear to them. But one thing was - the Clay Tree had claimed another victim. The one man in a position to guess what might have happened, attorney Jace Devlin, told his story to the sheriff.

JACE: (fading in) When I left, Russ Thompson was standing right here, sheriff. He was worried about the tree standing against the stone. I figured he was gonna climb up, tighten things up a bit.

SHERIFF: Eh, I guess that's what he did, all right.

JACE: When Russ failed to show up at the house, I came back and ...there he was. Up there, swinging, at the end of the rope, by his neck.

SHERIFF: From where the rope is hanging over the limb, it looks as though he climbed the tree, unfastened the hook, and was bringing it down to fasten it lower down on the tree. Then he must have tried to throw the rope over that other limb there, and slipped.

WHISTLER - -
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JACE: Yeah...I guess that's how the rope got tangled around his
neck...as he fell.

SHERIFF: That's the way it must have happened. Too bad.

JACE: Sure is. Poor Russ. The pity of it is that the very tree he was
trying so hard to protect for Alvira Clay's sake...finally hanged
him!

MUSIC: (Tymp Beats, Whistle, and Theme)

HITCHHIKER

ANNCR: Let that whistle be your signal - for the Signal Oil program - The Whistler - each Sunday night at this same time. Meantime Signal Oil Company and the friendly independent dealers who help you go-farther with Signal Gasoline - hope you'll remember; Regardless of what gasoline you use - you'll enjoy MORE miles of happy driving - if you drive at sensible speeds - obey traffic regulations - and avoid taking chances. You may even save a life; possibly your own!

~~THE SCENE -~~

News of tragedy - day tree victim -

Darlin - tells -
Russ hanging in tree -

1 ANNCR: Featured in tonight's story were Bill Forman as The
2 Whistler, Larry Dobkin, Jean Bates, Herb Butterfield,
3 Parley Baer, George Neisi and Britt Wood.
4 The Whistler was produced and directed by George W.
5 Allen with story by Adrian Gendot....music by
6 Wilbur Hatch...and was transmitted overseas by the
7 Armed Forces Radio Service. The Whistler was entirely
8 fictional and all characters portrayed on The Whistler
9 are also fictional. Any similarity of names or
10 resemblances of persons living or dead, is purely
11 coincidental.
12 (PAUSE)
13 Remember to tune in at this same time next Sunday when
14 the Signal Oil Company will bring you another strange
15 story by The Whistler.
16 Marvin Miller speaking for the Signal Oil Company.
17 Stay tuned now for "OUR MISS BROOKS", starring
18 EVE ARDEN which follows immediately over most of these
19 stations. This is the CBS....RADIO....NETWORK.
20